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INCENTIVE GRANT FOR QUALITY EDUCATION.

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A PROPOSAL TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF FLORIDA EDUCATION BY AWARDING INCENTIVE GRANTS TO PUBLIC SCHOOLS WAS DESCRIBED. THE PRESENT FOUNDATION PROGRAM FOR STATE SUPPORT OF PUBLIC EDUCATION HAS BEEN FOUND TO PROVIDE ONLY MINIMUM QUALITY EDUCATION, PARTLY CAUSED BY THE LACK OF LOCAL TAX EFFORT IN SUPPORTING THE FOUNDATION PROGRAM. IN THE FUTURE, THE GRANT'S AMOUNT WILL BE BASED ON LOCAL TAX COLLECTION EFFORTS. THE REQUIREMENTS GOVERNING EXPENDITURE, THE LEGISLATION IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN, AND THE COMPUTATION METHOD DETERMINING GRANTS WERE OUTLINED. THIS DOCUMENT IS ALSO AVAILABLE FROM THE FLORIDA EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL, COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA, GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA 32601, FOR $1.00. (HW)

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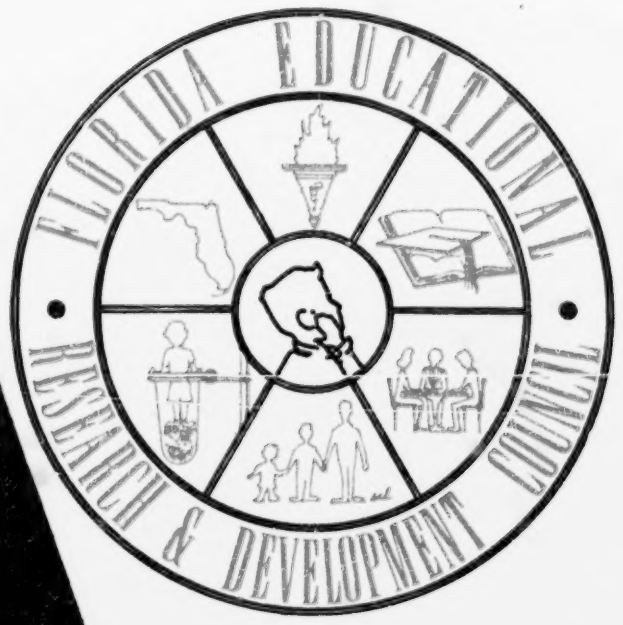

FLORIDA EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

R. L. JOHNS

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INCENTIVE GRANT FOR QUALITY EDUCATION

by

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1966

FOREWORD

Dr. R. L. Johns, Chairman of the Department of Educational Administration, College of Education, University of Florida, has assisted many states throughout the nation in developing a foundation program for the support of public education. It is only logical that these programs should be improved and revised in light of emerging conditions. Recognizing that there is a wide variation in local effort to support education, Dr. Johns has developed a suggested addition to the foundation program which carries the title of "Incentive Grant for Quality Education." It is the hope of those who endorse this idea that such a program will do much toward stimulating local school systems to make an adequate local effort to support public education. Should a state legislature adopt a program of this nature, there is no doubt that it will result in widespread improved support for public education.

This program has been endorsed in principle by the Department of Superintendents of the Florida Education Association, the Florida School Boards Association, the Board of Directors of the Florida Education Association, and the State Department of Education. Moreover it has the strong endorsement of a number of daily newspapers in Florida. The Florida Educational Research and Development Council is pleased to assist in this effort to improve education in Florida by making this pamphlet available to legislators, laymen, and other leaders in the state.

J. B. White, Executive Secretary

March, 1966

A PROPOSED INCENTIVE GRANT FOR QUALITY EDUCATION*

By R. L. Johns
Chairman of the Department of Educational Administration,
University of Florida

The foundation program method of apportioning state school funds has been in operation for forty-two years. New York State was the first state to establish this plan of state support. The late Dr. Paul Mort of Columbia University was the author of the original New York foundation program. During the past forty-two years, more than forty states have adopted the foundation program or equalization plan for distributing all or a part of their state funds for the public schools. Florida adopted the foundation program plan of state support in 1947. Dr. E. L. Morphet and the author, both of whom were students of Dr. Mort, did the major work in drafting the 1947 law at the request of the Florida Citizens' Committee on Education.

The foundation program method of distributing state school funds is sound in principle. It is based on the democratic philosophy that wealth should be taxed equally wherever it is located within a state in order to provide a minimum foundation program of education for all children regardless of where they live within that state. The foundation program has served Florida well during the past nineteen years. It has served other states well. The foundation program will continue and should continue to be the basic method of distributing state school funds in Florida.

When the foundation program plan was originated forty-two years ago, Mort and his students believed that it was the ideal plan for state school support. At that time and for many years thereafter, it was the ideal plan as compared with other known alternatives.

We have now had forty-two years of experience with the foundation program plan of state support in the nation and nineteen years experience in Florida. During the past forty-two years, Mort and his students and students of Mort's students have continued to do research on state support. We are now

* This plan has been developed in cooperation with the Florida State Department of Education. The Department approves this proposal in principle.

generally agreed that the foundation program plan alone is not the ideal plan of state support for the present time. We believe that something should be added to the foundation program plan in order to bring it in line with the best known methods of state support. A proposal is presented in this monograph for a supplement to the foundation program of Florida which should greatly improve the Florida plan of state support.

The original purpose of the foundation program was for the state by an equitable combination of state and local funds to guarantee a minimum program of education for every child in the state. That has now been accomplished. It is true that the present minimum educational program guaranteed in Florida is at too low a level. That minimum must be raised from time to time in future years. We have raised the minimum program from time to time in the past and we will do so in future years. The question is: Does the state have an additional responsibility for school financing in addition to its responsibility for maintaining a minimum foundation program for all children?

Those who have been researching this question have come to the conclusion that the state does have an additional responsibility. It is believed that the state has the additional responsibility of providing financial incentives for school districts to provide more than a minimum program of education for the children under their jurisdiction. There is a tendency for school financing to become static under foundation programs. All too many districts have become content with a minimum program of education. We need to insert a dynamic, stimulating element in the foundation program. Proof for that statement can readily be found by examining certain statistics for Florida county school systems.

Table I shows the ratio of the total local property taxes collected for schools in 1965-66 to the required local tax effort of each county for the support of the foundation program. The average county levies 4.203 times as much local property tax for schools as the required local minimum effort to support the foundation program. The ratio of total local taxes for schools to the required minimum effort is an excellent measure of local tax effort for schools because the required minimum effort is determined by an index of relative tax-paying ability. It will be noted that the effort ratio ranges from 1.100 in one county to 6.102 in another. This means that the county making the greatest effort in proportion to ability is making 5½ times as much

effort in proportion to its ability as the county making the least effort. In 1965-66, the local effort to support schools in relation to local ability in fourteen counties was less than one-half of the average local tax effort in the state.

TABLE I EFFORT RATIO--TOTAL LOCAL PROPERTY TAXES FOR SCHOOLS DIVIDED BY REQUIRED MINIMUM LOCAL TAX EFFORT 1965-66

	Total Local Property Taxes for Schools *	Required Minimum Local Tax Effort For Minimum Program K-12	Effort Ratio—Total Local Property Taxes For Schools ÷ Required Minimum Local Tax Effort
Alachua	$ 3,035,039	$ 857,799	3.538
Baker	166,970	71,930	2.321
Bay	1,477,450	614,550	2.404
Bradford	306,783	103,131	2.975
Brevard	8,436,945	1,895,527	4.451
Broward	18,727,107	4,842,230	3.867
Calhoun	65,209	45,774	1.424
Charlotte	1,128,600	184,963	6.102
Citrus	630,625	139,610	4.517
Clay	676,330	150,648	4.489
Collier	1,451,352	252,471	5.749
Columbia	510,299	209,438	2.437
Dade	63,154,665	12,650,592	4.992
DeSoto	214,962	128,042	1.679
Dixie	168,581	45,381	3.715
Duval	27,969,570	5,619,385	4.977
Escambia	6,796,572	1,731,739	3.925
Flagler	157,078	89,847	1.748
Franklin	168,620	52,001	3.243
Gadsden	770,583	248,174	3.105
Gilchrist	143,924	40,934	3.516
Glades	156,272	52,771	2.961
Gulf	339,790	84,821	4.006
Hamilton	116,631	60,720	1.921
Hardee	394,395	169,954	2.321
Hendry	619,258	205,078	3.020
Hernando	459,738	145,355	3.163
Highlands	986,956	324,277	3.044
Hillsborough	12,776,455	4,823,982	2.649
Holmes	132,390	64,332	2.058
Indian River	1,933,753	353,360	5.473
Jackson	346,342	268,788	1.289
Jefferson	129,394	87,427	1.480
Lafayette	28,919	26,281	1.100
Lake	3,326,053	881,034	3.775
Lee	3,428,737	818,547	4.189
Leon	2,974,053	756,168	3.934
Levy	228,663	120,070	1.904
Liberty	46,545	27,202	1.711

TABLE I — Continued

	Total Local Property Taxes for Schools *	Minimum Local Tax Effort For Required Minimum Program K-12	Effort Ratio— Total Local Property Taxes For Schools ÷ Required Minimum Local Tax Effort
Madison	211,074	122,624	1.721
Manatee	3,484,254	779,590	4.469
Marion	1,889,441	696,133	2.714
Martin	1,184,757	259,571	4.564
Monroe	1,949,436	395,335	4.931
Nassau	859,260	207,445	4.142
Okaloosa	961,875	468,822	2.052
Okeechobee	243,026	105,373	2.306
Orange	16,136,318	3,726,038	4.331
Osceola	1,014,530	202,276	5.016
Palm Beach	19,019,927	3,367,446	5.648
Pasco	1,417,627	434,445	3.263
Pinellas	20,907,090	4,370,045	4.784
Polk	10,388,013	2,630,272	3.949
Putnam	998,402	323,218	3.089
St. Johns	1,218,362	360,647	3.378
St. Lucie	1,953,180	530,103	3.685
Santa Rosa	521,925	206,947	2.522
Sarasota	4,373,500	1,147,082	3.813
Seminole	1,705,014	475,797	3.584
Sumter	370,701	140,435	2.640
Suwannee	342,154	171,573	1.994
Taylor	501,195	139,376	3.596
Union	117,088	37,740	3.102
Volusia	5,786,925	1,725,012	3.355
Wakulla	85,300	28,710	2.971
Walton	181,200	104,937	1.727
Washington	134,406	64,214	2.093
TOTAL	$262,537,579	$ 62,465,539	4.203†

* Total from maintenance and operation and debt service levies as shown by approved budgets for 1965-66.

† Average.

Not all counties have yet complied with the ruling of the State Supreme Court requiring that property be assessed at true market value. Data furnished by the Railroad Assessment Board show that only eight counties assessed property at 100 percent of true value in 1965-66 despite the fact that 17 counties revalued property in 1965. The methods used by the Board in estimating the percent of true value at which property is assessed are more likely to result in an over-estimate than an

under-estimate. Despite this fact, 40 counties in 1965-66 were reported as having assessed property at less than 60 percent of true value. Of this number, 16 counties assessed property at less than 40 percent of true value. Unless property is assessed at a high percent of market value, it is impossible for a county to make a reasonable local tax effort for schools because the constitution limits boards of public instruction to a school levy for maintenance and operation of 20 mills—a maximum of ten mills levied by the board and a maximum of 10 mills to be approved at biennial elections by electors who are freeholders.

Some counties are revaluing property for the 1966-67 fiscal year but in a number of counties, no action is being taken to comply with the court order. Up to March 2, 1966, no state authority had been used to compel the counties to assess property at 100 percent of true value. On March 2, 1966, the Leon County Circuit Court rendered an important decision on a suit brought by Marion County and Bay County taxpayers. The Court ruled that the State Comptroller should take the following action against the assessor in a county where there had been "intentional, arbitrary and systematic undervaluation of property:"

> First, he should refuse to approve the tax rolls
>
> Second, he should take the assessor to court in his own county
>
> Third, as a last resort the Comptroller should recommend to the Governor that the assessor be removed from office by the Governor.

The Court further cautioned that the comptroller should not arbitrarily substitute his judgment on the value of property for the assessor's judgment. Furthermore, the Court held that the Comptroller need not consider the estimates of the Railroad Assessment Board in determining whether property was underassessed.

It remains to be seen whether this opinion will speed up the revaluation of property in Florida. The procedure outlined in the Court's decision involves taking the matter to court. Prior to March 2, 1966, the only recourse in a county where property was underassessed was for a taxpayer to take the matter to court. This procedure has not been fully effective even when a favorable decision had been obtained. Taking a matter to court is always expensive in time and money. It is possible that the proposals presented in this monograph may be as effective

in obtaining the assessment of property at true value as court decisions.

But the assessment ratio is not the only obstacle to securing a reasonably adequate local tax effort to support schools. When property has been assessed at a sufficiently high percent of true value to provide some revenue margin, it is still necessary to make the tax levies. The 1965 legislature required, in a county which had increased its assessments by a major revaluation program, that the tax levies in the succeeding year be reduced proportionately plus an annual increase of not more than ten percent. Provision was made for exceptions to this rule in an emergency. This provision of the law has not been unduly restrictive, but boards of public instruction are encountering considerable public resistance to the voting of the needed levies. In November, 1965, the freeholders in a number of counties approved less district millage than the board recommended and more than 80,000 people in the state voted for no district millage at all which would have limited the board to a maximum levy of 10 mills. Fortunately this short-sighted policy did not prevail in any county.

The evidence is conclusive that the taxpayers in a large number of Florida counties are content to sit idly by and let the state make all of the moves to improve education. We cannot have high quality schools in any county unless there is substantial local financial effort to supplement the minimum foundation program. The minimum foundation program is not a quality program. It is a minimum program and it is so named in the law. The times demand and our children need a quality program, not a minimum program. How can we get such a program?

Those of us who originally developed foundation programs for state support hoped that minimum foundation programs would evolve into quality foundation programs. This has not happened in any state. The experience that we have had in Florida with the evolution of the foundation program has been similar to the experiences of other states with their foundation programs. These foundation programs have improved over the years but the growth has been slow because it has been necessary to obtain a state-wide consensus before a forward step could be taken.

Can some means be devised for speeding up the rate of increase in the quality of the educational program? Those of us

who have been studying this problem have come to the conclusion that we need to supplement the foundation program with an incentive grant to improve the quality of the educational program. The purpose of this incentive grant is to give additional state financial help to those districts that are willing to help themselves financially. It is interesting to note that one of the leading advocates of the incentive grant to supplement the foundation program was the late Dr. Mort, the father of the foundation program in the nation. Three states now have incentive grants of varying types. These states are New York, Rhode Island and Wisconsin. Dr. Mort developed the incentive grant plans in Rhode Island and New York shortly before his death.

Principles and Alternatives

Each incentive grant plan must be developed consistent with the foundation program plan for a state. Since foundation program plans differ in technology, so must incentive grant plans differ. However, there are certain principles governing incentive grant plans that are generally agreed upon by students of this matter. Those principles are as follows:

1. The amount of the incentive grant received by a school district should be determined by the local tax effort it makes in relation to its ability.
2. Incentive grants must be as beneficial to the least wealthy districts as to the most wealthy districts.
3. Local school officials should have maximum freedom to expend state funds from the incentive grant for improving the quality of the educational program with a minimum of state control.

A relatively simple incentive grant plan for Florida is presented in the remainder of this monograph. Assumptions are made in this publication with respect to the amount of funds available in order to demonstrate how the plan operates. The actual amount of money allocated can be greater than or less than the amount assumed as determined by the Legislature.

Let us assume that the Legislature has determined that the state appropriation for the public schools should be increased approximately $1,000 per instruction unit. The Legislature has available a number of alternatives which it could consider. Following are some of these alternatives:

1. The Legislature could increase the state allocation $1,000 per instruction unit as provided for in subsec-

tion (5) of section 236.07 of the Florida Statutes. This would increase the Minimum Foundation Program for Other Current Expenses by $1,000 per instruction unit. Under this alternative, the state appropriation per instruction unit would be increased by an average of only $750 per instruction unit because the counties collectively would have to raise from local taxes 25 percent of the increase, provided that the total collective local required effort may not be increased more than five percent per year. According to this plan each county would be charged with a uniform percent increase in its local effort to support the Foundation Program regardless of the total local effort it is now making. This alternative would provide no incentive whatsoever for those counties now making a low local effort, to increase that effort.

2. The Legislature could increase the state allocation $1,000 per instruction unit as provided for in subsection (1) of section 236.075 of the Florida Statutes. This refers to the allocation of the County School Sales Tax Trust Fund. This alternative would require an increase of $1,000 per instruction unit in state funds because it requires no local tax effort to qualify for the total amount of state allocation available. This plan would provide no incentive whatsoever for the lagging counties to increase their local tax effort to the level of other counties.
3. The Legislature could allocate $400 per instruction unit either under alternative 1 or 2 above and $600 per instruction unit under a quality education incentive plan which is described below.

The Proposed Incentive Grant

The principles governing the development of incentive grant plans for quality education have already been set forth. The assumptions underlying plans of this type are as follows:

1. The children need and the safety of the nation demands that more than a minimum quality of education be provided for all children.
2. Quality education cannot be provided in any school system jointly supported by state and local funds unless adequate tax effort for schools is made at both the state level and the local level. We have a partnership plan of school financing in Florida and unless the responsibilities of both partners are fulfilled, the needed educational opportunities are not provided.
3. Some part of the state funds provided for schools should be allocated in proportion to the total local tax

effort made by the counties in relation to ability. That is the more local tax effort a county makes for schools in proportion to its ability, the more state funds it will receive. This plan provides an incentive for counties to make a substantial local tax effort for schools. The requirement that the low tax effort counties must increase their local effort in order to share fully in increases in state funds should stimulate those counties to provide better local support for their schools. The increase in state funds accompanied by an increase in local effort of the lagging counties should provide the basis for financing a substantial increase in the quality of education in all counties.

Computation of the Incentive Grant

The technique for computing the incentive grant to each county based on 1965-66 data is set forth below.

Data Needed and Computation (all data for the current year)

1. Minimum local tax effort in dollars required of each system to support the Minimum Foundation Program.
2. Total local property taxes for schools in each system including maintenance and operation levies and levies for debt service. (Data taken from the local budgets, the estimate of local taxes approved by the State Department of Education.)
3. Number of instruction units allotted in the Minimum Foundation Program.
4. Compute the ratio of the required minimum local tax effort to total local property taxes for schools in each school system by dividing Item 2 by Item 1.
5. Compute the state average ratio by dividing the state total of local property taxes levied for schools by the state total of required local effort to support the Minimum Foundation Program.
6. Compute the local property tax effort of each local school system in relation to the state average effort by dividing Item 4 by Item 5, provided that the divisor may not exceed 4.5.
7. Multiply Item 3 by $600 (or some other appropriate figure).
8. Compute the incentive grant for each system by multiplying Item 7, by Item 6 provided no multiplier from Item 6 can be greater than 1.100.

The computations of the incentive grant are relatively simple. They are set forth in Tables I and II. It will be noted that

TABLE II PROPOSED INCENTIVE GRANT FOR QUALITY EDUCATION APPLIED TO FLORIDA DATA
1965-66

	Instruction Units	Col. 1 X $600	Effort Ratio—Total Local Property Taxes For Schools ÷ Required Local M.P. Effort	Effort in Relation to State Average Col. 3 ÷ 4.203	Incentive Grant Col. 2 X Col. 4 (Not in Excess of 1.100)
	Col. 1	Col. 2	Col. 3	Col. 4	Col. 5
Alachua	877	$ 526,200	3.538	.842	$ 443,060
Baker	98	58,800	2.321	.552	32,458
Bay	720	432,000	2.404	.572	247,104
Bradford	167	100,200	2.975	.708	70,942
Brevard	1,959	1,175,400	4.451	1.059	1,244,749
Broward	3,446	2,067,600	3.867	.920	1,902,192
Calhoun	108	64,800	1.424	.339	21,967
Charlotte	116	69,600	6.102	1.452	76,560
Citrus	124	74,400	4.517	1.075	79,980
Clay	235	141,000	4.489	1.068	150,588
Collier	223	133,800	5.749	1.368	147,180
Columbia	271	162,600	2.437	.580	94,308
Dade	8,309	4,985,400	4.992	1.188	5,483,940
DeSoto	116	69,600	1.679	.399	27,770
Dixie	66	39,600	3.715	.884	35,006
Duval	4,778	2,866,800	4.977	1.184	3,153,480
Escambia	1,977	1,186,200	3.925	.934	1,107,911
Flagler	61	36,600	1.748	.416	15,226
Franklin	71	42,600	3.243	.772	32,887
Gadsden	458	274,800	3.105	.739	203,077
Gilchrist	47	28,200	3.516	.837	23,603
Glades	46	27,600	2.961	.704	19,430
Gulf	130	78,000	4.006	.953	74,334
Hamilton	109	65,400	1.921	.457	29,888
Hardee	133	79,800	2.321	.552	44,050
Hendry	115	69,000	3.020	.718	49,542
Hernando	134	80,400	3.163	.753	60,541
Highlands	258	154,800	3.044	.724	112,075
Hillsborough	3,936	2,361,600	2.649	.630	1,488,438
Holmes	141	84,600	2.058	.490	41,454
Indian River	290	174,000	5.473	1.302	191,400
Jackson	412	247,200	1.289	.307	75,890
Jefferson	128	76,800	1.480	.352	27,034
Lafayette	35	21,000	1.100	.262	5,502
Lake	587	352,200	3.775	.898	316,276
Lee	618	370,800	4.189	.997	369,688
Leon	849	509,400	3.934	.936	476,798
Levy	135	81,000	1.904	.453	36,693
Liberty	45	27,000	1.711	.407	10,989
Madison	181	108,600	1.721	.409	44,417

TABLE II — Continued

	Instruction Units Col. 1	Col. 1 X $600 Col. 2	Effort Ratio—Total Local Property Taxes For Schools ÷ Required Local M.P. Effort Col. 3	Effort in Relation to State Average Col. 3 ÷ 4.203 Col. 4	Incentive Grant Col. 2 X Col. 4 (Not in Excess of 1.100) Col. 5
Manatee	711	426,600	4.469	1.063	453,476
Marion	657	394,200	2.714	.646	254,653
Martin	197	118,200	4.564	1.086	128,365
Monroe	377	226,200	4.931	1.173	248,820
Nassau	234	140,400	4.142	.986	138,434
Okaloosa	802	481,200	2.052	.488	234,826
Okeechobee	99	59,400	2.306	.549	32,611
Orange	2,933	1,759,800	4.331	1.030	1,812,594
Osceola	188	112,800	5.016	1.193	124,080
Palm Beach	2,302	1,381,200	5.648	1.344	1,519,320
Pasco	336	201,600	3.263	.776	156,442
Pinellas	2,904	1,742,400	4.784	1.138	1,916,640
Polk	2,142	1,285,200	3.949	.940	1,208,088
Putnam	382	229,200	3.089	.735	168,462
St. Johns	274	164,400	3.378	.804	132,178
St. Lucie	440	264,000	3.685	.877	231,528
Santa Rosa	345	207,000	2.522	.600	124,200
Sarasota	696	417,600	3.813	.907	378,763
Seminole	657	394,200	3.584	.853	336,253
Sumter	158	94,800	2.640	.628	59,534
Suwannee	191	114,600	1.994	.474	54,320
Taylor	166	99,600	3.596	.856	85,258
Union	57	34,200	3.102	.738	25,240
Volusia	1,373	823,800	3.355	.798	657,392
Wakulla	73	43,800	2.971	.707	30,967
Walton	192	115,200	1.727	.411	47,347
Washington	157	94,200	2.093	.498	46,912
TOTAL	51,552	$30,931,200	4.203*	1.000*	$28,675,130

* Average

a county has a financial incentive to make a local tax effort up to 10 percent above the state average local effort. It could be argued that no state financial incentive should be provided for local effort in excess of the state average local effort. On the other hand, it could be argued that state financial incentives should be provided for as high a level of local effort that any dis-

trict is willing to go. Rhode Island does this in its incentive plan. The plan provided herein seems to be a reasonable compromise because it provides incentives for a reasonably substantial local effort without encouraging unlimited local tax increases. Furthermore the limitation of the divisor in Item 6 above to 4.5 will prevent the counties from forcing each other into unlimited local tax increases in order to qualify for the incentive grant. However local operation and maintenance taxes for schools in Florida are limited by the Constitution to 20 mills and therefore it is impossible for school taxes in Florida to become excessive as compared with the Northern and Western states.

Column 5 of Table II shows that it would have required $28,675,130 in state funds to finance the proposed incentive grant in 1965-66. This amounted to $556.24 per instruction unit in 1965-66. It is assumed that the amount allocated per instruction unit would increase somewhat in the future as the counties increase their local effort. However it is not anticipated that the increase would bring the allocation up to more than $600 per instruction unit in the near future because the state average ratio used as the divisor would increase proportionately up to 4.5. However if the requirement for the allocation did exceed the appropriation, it could be scaled proportionately.

Requirements Governing the Expenditure of the Incentive Grant

The proposed requirements governing the expenditure of the state incentive grant are as follows:

1. The incentive grant fund must be expended entirely for instructional purposes as defined in the state approved accounting system.
2. Each board of public instruction shall require its professional staff, assisted by such consulting help as the board may obtain, to evaluate its educational program at least quadrennially and to make recommendations to the board as to how the incentive grant could most wisely be expended to improve the quality of education in that county. Each board of public instruction must develop a plan for the use of the incentive grant, prior to or during the first year of the operation of the grant. A copy of that plan should be filed with the state superintendent of public instruction. This plan should be revised periodically in accordance with the findings of evaluative studies.
3. At the end of each biennium, the superintendent of

public instruction in each county shall make a report to the state superintendent of public instruction showing how the incentive grant to that county was used to improve the quality of education in that county. The state superintendent of public instruction shall make a summary of these reports available to the Legislature biennially.

Local boards of public instruction, superintendents of public instruction and the professional employees of the board should be held directly responsible for the judicious use of the incentive grant. There should be a minimum of state control over this fund. Local boards are already harassed by a multitude of Federal controls over the uses of recently increased Federal funds. All of these increased funds are earmarked for special purposes specified by the Federal Government. Federal funds cannot be used to raise the general level of the quality of education. Boards of public instruction sorely need some funds over which they have discretion to determine their use for increasing the quality of education in that county. Conditions and needs vary in each county and competent local officials are in better position to know what these needs are than Federal and state officials.

There has been a tendency in recent years to reduce the authority of local government and to increase the authority of the Federal Government and the state governments. Some of these changes have probably been desirable but there are many who believe that the basic strength of American Democracy is founded on the vigor of local governments. The incentive grant plan proposed herein not only provides for increasing the quality of education in every county in Florida but it also tends to revitalize local government by providing incentives for local governments to assume an equitable share of the cost of education and it vests local school governments with the authority and the responsibility to make a wise use of incentive funds.

Legislation Needed

An Act of the Legislature would be needed to implement the incentive grant plan proposed in this monograph. However this would be a relatively simple act. All of the essential provisions of that act are included in this publication. Furthermore, relatively simple procedures are required for the administration of the proposed act.

Summary

Table III provides a summary of the state funds that would be available to each county using 1965-66 data, assuming that $600 per instruction unit would be allocated by the incentive grant plan and $400 by section 236.075 of the Florida statutes. It would have required $28,675,130 to fund the incentive plan and $20,620,800 for the $400 per instruction unit grant or a total of $49,295,930 to fund both plans in 1965-66.

TABLE III TOTAL INCREASE IN STATE FUNDS PROVIDED BY ALLOCATING $600 PER INSTRUCTION UNIT BY AN INCENTIVE GRANT FOR QUALITY EDUCATION PLUS $400 PER INSTRUCTION BY SECTION 236.075 OF FLORIDA STATUTES APPLIED TO 1965-66 DATA

	$600 Per Instruction Unit By Incentive Plan	$400 Per Instruction Unit By Section 236.075	Total
Alachua	$ 443,060	$ 350,800	$ 793,860
Baker	32,458	39,200	71,658
Bay	247,104	288,000	535,104
Bradford	70,942	66,800	137,742
Brevard	1,244,749	783,600	2,028,349
Broward	1,902,192	1,378,400	3,280,592
Calhoun	21,967	43,200	65,167
Charlotte	76,560	46,400	122,960
Citrus	79,980	49,600	129,580
Clay	150,588	94,000	244,588
Collier	147,180	89,200	236,380
Columbia	94,308	108,400	202,708
Dade	5,483,940	3,323,600	8,807,540
DeSoto	27,770	46,400	74,170
Dixie	35,006	26,400	61,406
Duval	3,153,480	1,911,200	5,064,680
Escambia	1,107,911	790,800	1,898,711
Flagler	15,226	24,400	39,626
Franklin	32,887	28,400	61,287
Gadsden	203,077	183,200	386,277
Gilchrist	23,603	18,800	42,403
Glades	19,430	18,400	37,830
Gulf	74,334	52,000	126,334
Hamilton	29,888	43,600	73,488
Hardee	44,050	53,200	97,250
Hendry	49,542	46,000	95,542
Hernando	60,541	53,600	114,141
Highlands	112,075	103,200	215,275
Hillsborough	1,488,438	1,574,400	3,062,838
Holmes	41,454	56,400	97,854
Indian River	191,400	116,000	307,400
Jackson	75,890	164,800	240,690
Jefferson	27,034	51,200	78,234
Lafayette	5,502	14,000	19,502

TABLE III — Continued

	$600 Per Instruction Unit By Incentive Plan	$400 Per Instruction Unit By Section 236.075	Total
Lake	316,276	234,800	551,076
Lee	369,688	247,200	616,888
Leon	476,798	339,600	816,398
Levy	36,693	54,000	90,693
Liberty	10,989	18,000	28,989
Madison	44,417	72,400	116,817
Manatee	453,476	284,400	737,876
Marion	254,653	262,800	517,453
Martin	128,365	78,800	207,165
Monroe	248,820	150,800	399,620
Nassau	138,434	93,600	232,034
Okaloosa	234,826	320,800	555,626
Okeechobee	32,611	39,600	72,211
Orange	1,812,594	1,173,200	2,985,794
Osceola	124,080	75,200	199,280
Palm Beach	1,519,320	920,800	2,440,120
Pasco	156,442	134,400	290,842
Pinellas	1,916,640	1,161,600	3,078,240
Polk	1,208,088	856,800	2,064,888
Putnam	168,462	152,800	321,262
St. Johns	132,178	109,600	241,778
St. Lucie	231,528	176,000	407,528
Santa Rosa	124,200	138,000	262,200
Sarasota	378,763	278,400	657,163
Seminole	336,253	262,800	599,053
Sumter	59,534	63,200	122,734
Suwannee	54,320	76,400	130,720
Taylor	85,258	66,400	151,658
Union	25,240	22,800	48,040
Volusia	657,392	549,200	1,206,592
Wakulla	30,967	29,200	60,167
Walton	47,347	76,800	124,147
Washington	46,912	62,800	109,712
TOTAL	$28,675,130	$20,620,800	$49,295,930

It might be argued that the entire $1,000 per instruction unit should be allocated according to the incentive plan. However, it is believed that a period of time is needed for the low effort counties to bring their local tax effort up to average practice. The allocation of $400 of the $1,000 on a straight instruction unit basis would give low effort counties the time needed to increase their local tax effort without suffering so drastic a financial penalty during the interim period.

In the first part of this monograph, three alternative plans of action were set forth for the consideration of the Legislature.

The evidence set forth above shows clearly that alternative 3 which incorporates the incentive grant for quality education is by far the best plan.

In conclusion, the proposed incentive grant is sound in principle. It adds a dynamic element to the foundation program. It helps the counties that are willing to help themselves. It helps the less wealthy counties as well as the more wealthy counties to improve the quality of education. It encourages local initiative to improve the quality of education. Finally, when we add an incentive grant for quality education to the foundation program, Florida will again have a plan of state support equal to the best in the nation with respect to soundness and equity of design.

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